

PSJ18 WALGREENS Opp Exh 1

Walgreens fight against national opioid crisis

Saving lives today and tomorrow

Drug overdose deaths—the majority from prescription and illicit opioids—are now the nation’s leading injury fatality. Addiction to prescription painkillers, heroin and other opioids has surged, with opioid overdoses quadrupling in this decade, federal officials say. Deaths from overdose reached 64,000 last year alone—175 per day—a 21 percent increase in one year and more fatalities than from motor vehicle crashes and gun homicides combined.

Walgreens, as the nation’s largest pharmacy chain with more than 8,000 locations in communities across the country, has the ability—and a critical responsibility—to fight the opioid crisis. On the frontlines of the U.S. healthcare system, Walgreens serves some 10 million customers per day in its stores and online, and fills over 900 million prescriptions a year. Some 75 percent of the U.S. population lives within five miles of a Walgreens location.

Given Walgreens’ leadership in the industry, major presence in communities across the country, and mission to champion everyone’s right to be happy and healthy, the company has launched an aggressive, multi-million dollar effort to lead in addressing the national opioid crisis. The Walgreens plan to combat the opioid crisis includes aggressive steps to:

1. Save lives, first and foremost;
2. Deter misuse, abuse and addiction by curbing the flow of opioids that fuel the epidemic;
3. Prevent future misuse and abuse of prescription drugs.

Saving lives

Walgreens announced it is stocking Narcan®, an FDA-approved nasal spray form of naloxone for emergency treatment of opioid overdose, in all of its 8,000-plus pharmacies nationwide.

Narcan is likened to defibrillators and EpiPen as an emergency life-saving treatment. By stocking Narcan in all of its pharmacies, Walgreens is making the opioid overdose antidote more readily available for families and emergency care providers to prevent needless opioid overdose deaths.

The Walgreens commitment to stock Narcan in all pharmacies builds on its announcement in 2016 to make naloxone, the leading lifesaving opioid antidote, more easily available without a prescription in pharmacies across the nation and especially in key affected communities. Walgreens has steadily expanded its no-prescription naloxone program to 45 states where legally allowed, focusing especially on hard-hit communities. When Walgreens completes implementation of the program, naloxone will be available without a prescription in more than 7,000 of Walgreens’ nearly 8,200 stores.

Naloxone—administered by injection or Narcan spray—is a crucial remedy to the opioid epidemic, as it can be used in the event of an overdose to reverse the effects of heroin or other opioid drugs. Walgreens dispenses the medication in accordance with each state’s pharmacy regulations, and its pharmacists provide instructions on how to administer the medication. This includes calling 911, as naloxone is not a substitute for medical care, and anyone who is administered the medication should seek immediate medical attention.

Deterring misuse and abuse

Walgreens is accelerating its national effort to provide safe medication disposal kiosks in pharmacy locations to help deter unwanted, unused or expired supplies of prescription opioids from being misused, fueling addiction or overdose. The Walgreens drug take-back kiosks allow individuals to safely, conveniently dispose prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications.

Starting in early 2016, Walgreens has installed 600 safe medication disposal kiosks across 45 states and the District of Columbia. Those kiosks collected 155 tons of unwanted medications in the first 18 months of the program.

Further accelerating the effort, in October 2017, Walgreens joined with leading health care organizations AmerisourceBergen, Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, Pfizer and Prime Therapeutics to combat the opioid abuse crisis by expanding the availability of safe medication disposal kiosks to another 900 Walgreens stores near military bases and other areas where the opioid epidemic has challenged communities. When the expansion is complete, Walgreens will have kiosks in 1,500 stores nationwide, with a goal of collecting 300 more tons of unwanted medication in the next two years.

Focus on the military: Officials say Armed Forces communities are a particularly vulnerable population, and as such, Walgreens and its partners are focusing the expanded drug-kiosk plan to serve them.

Walgreens is also working with healthcare partners to further control prescription of opioids, including dispensing and clinical management programs for chronic pain patients.

Preventing further addiction

As Walgreens takes steps to inform patients prescribed opioids the risk of addiction, the company has launched a campaign called *#ItEndsWithUs* to educate teens on the opioid epidemic and steps they can take including how to dispose unwanted medications. Walgreens sponsored a WE Day event (through the WE organization and movement of young people committed to make a difference) for the *#ItEndsWithUs* campaign with actor Brandon Larracuenta, widely known for his roles in the Netflix dramas *Bloodline* and *13 Reasons Why*.

Walgreens also is re-launching its *Combat Drug Abuse* website to feature links and content from the CDC, SAMHSA, American Public Health Association (APHA) and other national healthcare partners to support the resources available for patients and communities to combat drug abuse and also, to build a platform for pharmacists to educate the community on these public resources and Walgreens' assistance in them. Walgreens and APHA also are exploring ways to further educate pharmacists in helping to curb opioid misuse and addiction, including uniting doctors and pharmacists around patient conversations to curb unnecessary opioid dispensing.

The opioid epidemic demands a combined and concerted efforts by all parties to deter, treat and prevent this national healthcare crisis. Walgreens has a crucial role and responsibility, and we welcome partnership with any and all concerned to redouble our impact.